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A study to determine the effectiveness of (1) a steel box beam median barrier design developed by the New York Department of Public Works and (2) a concrete median barrier design developed by the State of New Jersey Highway Department, by means of full scale dynamic impact tests is reported. Three tests were conducted on the basic New York 6 by 8 by 1/4-in. box beam design at speeds of 71, 64, and 49 mph and approach angles of 25, 25, and 7 deg. respectively with slight modifications to the beam-to-post connections for each test. Three tests were conducted on the 32 inch high New Jersey concrete barrier design at speeds of 38, 65, and 63 mph and approach angles of 7, 7, and 25 deg. respectively.

Findings indicate that both the box beam and the concrete median barrier designs perform effectively and are suitable for use on flat, paved medians free of curbs, dykes, ditches, and sawtooth slopes. The median width for placement of the box beam barrier should be at least 10 feet to provide for large deflections. The concrete barrier appears to be relatively maintenance free and is particularly suitable for placement on narrow medians.

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### HIGHWAY RESEARCH REPORT

# DYNAMIC TESTS OF STEEL BOX BEAM AND CONCRETE MEDIAN BARRIERS

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA

TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

**DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS** 

MATERIALS AND RESEARCH DEPARTMEN

**RESEARCH REPORT** 

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## STATE OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION AGENCY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS

### DYNAMIC TESTS OF STEEL BOX BEAM AND CONCRETE MEDIAN BARRIERS

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Findings indicate that both the box beam and the concrete median barrier designs perform effectively and are suitable for use on flat, paved medians free of curbs, dykes, ditches, and sawtooth slopes. The median width for placement of the box beam barrier should be at least 10 feet to provide for large deflections. The concrete barrier appears to be relatively maintenance free and is particularly suitable for placement on narrow medians.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Full scale impact tests on the New York steel box beam median barrier and the New Jersey concrete median barrier were conducted in 1966 and 1967 by the California Division of Highways. It was felt that these two barrier designs showed promise of being as effective on narrow medians as the current California "W" beam median barrier and in addition appeared to offer improvement from an aesthetic viewpoint.

Part 1 of this report presents the results of the tests to determine the effectiveness of a steel box beam median barrier design developed by the New York Department of Public Works. Three full scale dynamic impact tests were conducted on the basic New York 6-by 8-by ½ in. box beam barrier design at speeds of 71, 64, and 49 mph and approach angles of 25 deg., 25 deg., and 7 deg. respectively with slight modifications to the beam-to-post connections for each test.

Part 2 of this report presents the results of the tests to determine the effectiveness of a concrete median barrier design developed by the State of New Jersey Highway Department. Three full scale dynamic impact tests were conducted on the 32-in. high New Jersey concrete barrier design at speeds of 38, 65, and 63 mph and approach angles of 7, 7, and 25 deg. respectively.

Although both of the basic barrier designs investigated had been subjected to previous testing by other researchers, neither had been fully tested to the California standards of 65 mph/25 deg. for dynamic impact proof testing of barriers.

All tests were conducted under the general guidelines established by the Highway Research Board Committee on Guardrails and Guide Posts (1).

This work was accomplished in cooperation with the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Bureau of Public Roads, as Item D-04-37 of Work Program HPR-1(4), Part III, Research. The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Bureau of Public Roads.

#### PART 1 - DYNAMIC TESTS OF BOX BEAM MEDIAN BARRIER

#### I. BACKGROUND

The box beam median barrier's "strong beam/weak post" concept was developed during a test series conducted by the New York State Department of Public Works, in cooperation with the Bureau of Public Roads, and was reported in January  $1964^{(2)}$ . The report indicated that the box beam type median barrier was particularly effective in regards to vehicle redirection at a low exit angle and with a low deceleration rate.

In view of this favorable report and the generally pleasing appearance, the California Division of Highways felt that the box beam median barrier would be particularly applicable for use in narrow (6-ft and less) medians.

#### II. OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this series of tests was (1) to determine the effectiveness of box beam median barriers for use on narrow (6-ft or less) medians and (2) to determine its maintenance characteristics.

#### III. CONCLUSIONS

Based upon analysis of the results of this test series and the New York tests, it is concluded that the box beam median barrier is suitable for use subject to the following limitations and considertions that generally also apply to the California cable type median barrier, namely:

- 1. Due to the dynamic and permanent lateral beam deflections recorded in the impact tests at critical speeds and angles, the minimum median width should be at least 10 feet to contain a box beam barrier located in the center. This minimum median width should be increased if adequate area is to be provided for maintenance vehicles on one or both sides of the barrier.
- 2. Until further operational or test experience is gained, the use of the box beam should be limited to flat surface medians. The median should be free of curbs, dikes, ditches, and sawtooth slopes in the vicinity of the barrier.
- 3. Even on flat medians, the box beam barrier may not prove to be as effective as the current California beam-type median barrier in containing trucks and other high center of gravity vehicles because the impact tests indicated that the box beam tends to deflect downwards during impact whereas the blocked-out beam tends to rise.
- 4. With the same vehicle at the same speed and angle, the impact into the box beam barrier resulted in lower lateral decelerations than observed during impacts with

the current California "W" beam type median barrier. However, lateral decelerations are higher on the box beam barrier than experienced during tests on the California cable-type barrier.

- 5. Due to the considerable wheel-to-post involvement observed even in the relatively moderate 49 mph/10 deg. impact tests, maintenance repair costs will be greater than experienced on the beam barrier and almost as much as we have experienced on cable-type barrier installations.
- 6. Provisions to mount a glare screen on the box beam may present a problem during maintenance repairs since the screen would have to be mounted on the box beam itself, rather than on posts, independent of the beam, as in the case of the current blocked-out beam median barrier.
- 7. It is estimated that the initial construction cost in California for the box beam median barrier will range from approximately \$8.50 to \$11.50 per lin/ft as compared to an average of \$2.50 per foot for the current cable type and \$8.50 for the current blocked-out beam type median barrier.
- 8. Recommended design details for the box beam median barrier are shown in Exhibit 2 (Appendix).

#### IV. DISCUSSION

#### A. Design and Performance

Common to each of the three box beam barrier test installations were the beams, beam splices, posts, and post footings as shown in Exhibit 4 (Appendix).

The beams were 8- by 6- by ½ in. steel tubing ASTM A501

17 ft 11½ in. long. The beam splices utilized a one-piece sleeve-type connection. This exterior connection was selected in lieu of New York's two-piece clamp-type splice in an attempt to increase the beaming strength of the system thus minimizing the lateral deflection. Due to the increased speed anticipated (65 mph vs New York's 56 mph) and the heavier test vehicles (4500 lb vs New York's 3800 lb), it was felt that the two piece clamp might deform under the heavier impact loading conditions.

The posts were 315.7- by 36-in. structural steel ASTM A36 embedded 16 in. ± in a 4-in. diameter sheet metal can filled with paving grade asphalt. The post sockets were filled with 200-300 penetration asphalt for Test 141 and topped off with 85-100 penetration for Tests 142 and 143. (No 200-300 penetration asphalt was available on short notice for the later tests.)

The socketed post footings were 16 in. diam. by 24 in. deep, Class A concrete. The posts for all three barriers utilized the same post footings as no damage was incurred to the concrete in any of the tests.

Each of the test installations had a different type of beam to post connection as discussed below. The end anchorage used for Tests 142 and 143 is detailed in Exhibit 3 (Appendix). No end anchorage was used for the Test 141 barrier.

#### 1. <u>Test 141</u>

The installation for Test 141 was a 198-ft unanchored section of box beam barrier. The decision to test this barrier without anchoring the beam was based upon (1) successful tests of 200-ft unanchored installations of box beam median barrier in the test series conducted by the State of New York (3) and (2) successful tests of 162½-ft unanchored sections of "W" beam guardrail used in the California Series X project (4).

As it was felt that the  $1\frac{1}{2}$ - by 7-in. paddle slots in the New York design would permit localized bending to occur in the beam under severe impact loading, the post/beam connection was revised in an attempt to effect an economic and operational improvement. Figure 1 is a detail of the

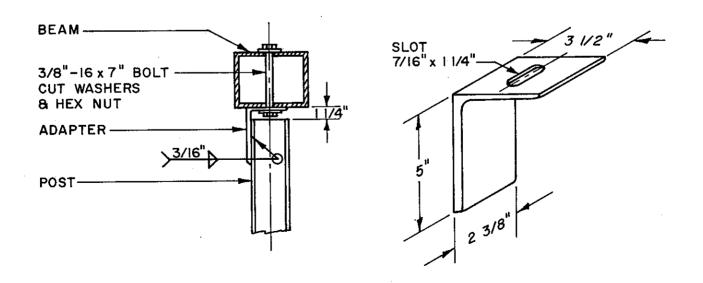


FIGURE 1 (TEST 141)

angle clip connection used in Test 141. It was anticipated that the 3/8-in. bolts would shear only in the immediate impact length of railing.

However, in Test 141 the barrier failed to retain the vehicle under the relatively severe 71 mph/25 deg. impact conditions. The box beam was torn free of all posts and thrown more than 50 ft from the original centerline when the 3/8-in. diameter beam-to-post clip bolts throughout the entire length of the test installation failed in "zipper" action by shear and tension. Three 18-ft sections of beam were damaged beyond economical repair. However, based on the results of the succeeding Test 142, it is felt that an anchored installation with larger or high strength beam-to-post bolts would have successfully retained the vehicle.

Due to time limitations further testing to improve this unslotted design was discontinued in favor of testing of New York's then current paddle/slot design.

#### 2. Test 142

For Test 142 a 201-ft installation of anchored box beam barrier utilizing the paddle/slot design shown in Figure 2 was impacted at 64 mph/25 deg.

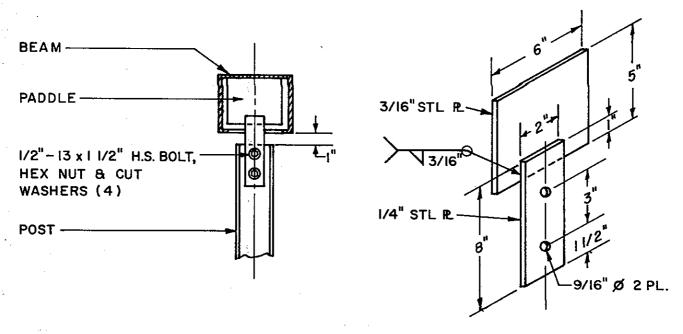


FIGURE 2 (TEST 142)

In Test 142 the vehicle was effectively redirected to an exit angle of 6 deg. during a contact distance of approximately 37 ft.

However, the 4-ft dynamic lateral deflection coupled with a considerable loss of beam height (10.5 in.) permitted the vehicle to roll more than 18 deg. into the barrier (Figure 3).

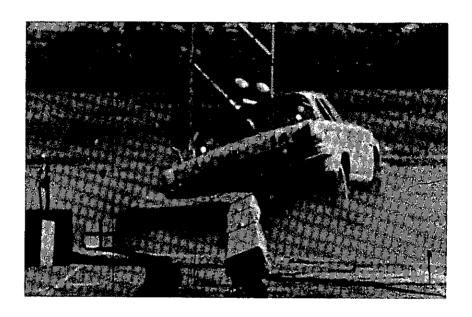


FIGURE 3

This roll was considerably more than has been experienced with a blocked-out "W" beam system impacted under similar conditions. Past impact test experience indicates it is possible that this vehicle reaction could result in a roll-over under more severe impact conditions. The 4-ft lateral deflection would govern the median width upon which this barrier should be installed. Three sections of the beam, 11 posts, and 22 paddles were damaged during the impact and one post was pulled out of the socket. The paddles on posts that

were contacted had damage that indicated they had snagged as they pulled out of the beam slot.

The immediate entrapment of the left front wheel with the first post contacted can be seen in Figures 4 and 5.



FIGURE 4 (Impact + 0.075 Sec)

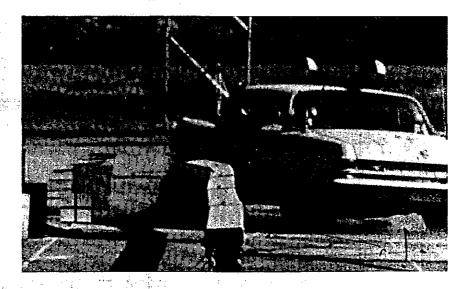
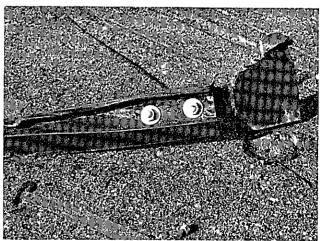


FIGURE 5 (Impact + 0.100 Sec)

Past experience indicates that this wheel/post involvement is typical of most impacts on 27-in. high beam-type barriers that are not blocked-out or barriers over 27 in. high that are not provided with a rubbing rail mounted below the beam. ever, with this strong beam/weak post system, it was felt that the relatively light 3I5.7 posts did not affect the smooth progression of the vehicle through impact as would an 8- by 8-in. timber post or 6-in. steel "H" post. Further review of the data films indicated that the severe damage to the front wheel and suspension was caused primarily by the paddles hanging up in the beam slots. It is apparent that the post twisted when impacted and the paddle hung up diagonally in the  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -in. beam slot, locking the post to the beam. Figures 6a and 6b show two posts with sheared paddles. For Test 143 the paddles were lengthened and beveled to minimize the snagging.





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FIGURE 6

The two upstream anchor rods in Test 142 were instrumented with SR-4 strain gages mounted and oriented as indicated in Exhibit 3 (Appendix). The barrier was pretensioned to approximately 1000 1b with the anchorage turnbuckles. During the 64 mph/25 deg. impact, the strain gage instrumentation indicated that a peak load of approximately 32 kips was transmitted through one of the rods to the anchor.

All of the beam splice bolts (ASTM Designation: A307 steel) used in Test 142 sustained some shear deformation and the top and bottom were sheared completely off one bolt. Figure 7 shows the head of the splice bolt and the washer just after shearing. This failure occurred at the time of maximum dynamic deflection and is a good example of the magnitude of the tensile forces that can be transmitted a considerable distance downstream as well as upstream from impact on any tension barrier system such as the box beam barrier.

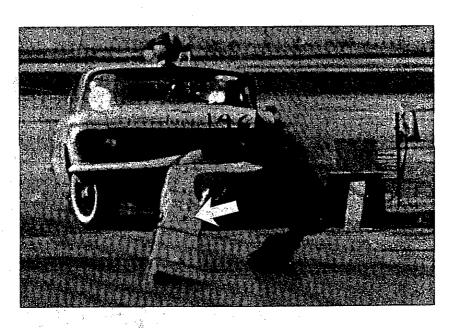


FIGURE 7
(Impact + 0.225 Sec)

This splice bolt failure had no appreciable effect on the over-all performance of the barrier for this test as the vehicle had almost been redirected and maximum dynamic deflection had occurred. However, rather than chance a splice bolt failure affecting the results of succeeding tests, the A307 bolts were replaced with high strength bolts.

The vehicle sustained moderate front-end sheet metal damage and severe front-end undercarriage damage.

#### 3. Test 143

After viewing the data film from Test 142, and observing the satisfactory performance of the system under the relatively severe impact conditions of 64 mph/25 deg., it was felt that no further high speed, oblique angle tests on the New York box beam median barrier were necessary. However, in order to acquire maintenance data on a moderate impact that would be representative of a majority of the freeway median barrier accidents, Test 143 was scheduled. The impact angle and speed were reduced to 49 mph/10 deg. for this test.

To correct the deficiencies noted in barrier Test 142, the barrier used in Test 143 incorporated a beveled paddle design (Figure 8) to minimize the snagging tendency and high strength steel beam splice bolts (ASTM Designation: A325) to minimize the splice bolt shear deformation.

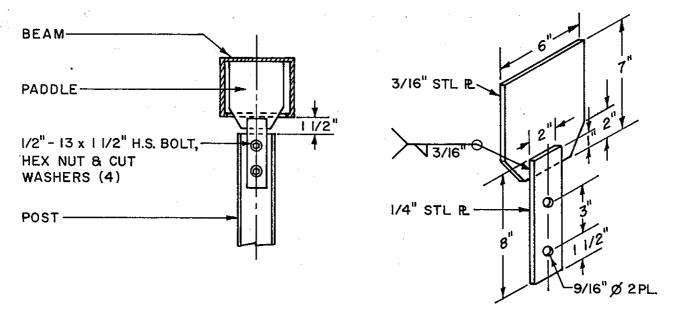


FIGURE 8
(TEST 143)

The box beam installation for Test 143 was 201 ft long. The end anchorage employed in Test 142 was used.

The test vehicle impacted the barrier 100 ft from the upstream end and was redirected to an exit angle of 3 deg. during a contact distance of approximately 21 ft. The left front tire was ruptured by a post causing the vehicle to curve into a secondary impact with the barrier 42 ft beyond the initial contact and traveled parallel in contact with the beam for an additional 30 ft before finally leaving the barrier at a 3 deg. angle. Three posts were damaged beyond repair and nine paddles required replacement. However, the beam sustained the impact with no evidence

of bending and as expected, no damage to the 3/4-in. high strength splice bolts. There was no evidence of snagging with the beveled paddle design and no tendency for the vehicle to roll. Repairs to the damaged barrier are discussed under Section C of this report.

The vehicle sustained minor sheet metal damage and the left front tire was ruptured.

In view of the successful test results obtained with the slotted beam and modified paddle design used in Test 143, no further testing of the box beam barrier was considered necessary.

New York's experience with the paddles in a test on an aluminum box beam design<sup>(3)</sup> indicates that an offset would be desirable in the edge of the paddle to restrain the vertical deflection of the beam upwards under severe impact conditions. This offset as shown in Figure 9 would

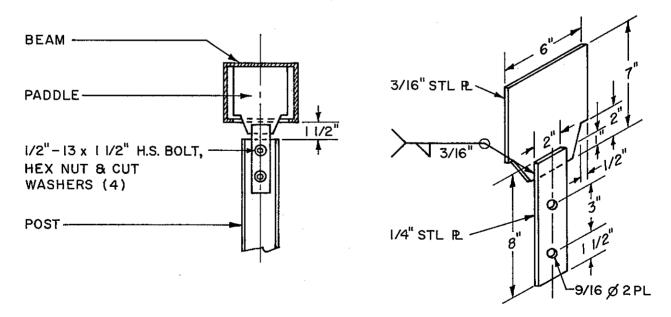


FIGURE 9

tend to restrain the beam until it was firmly embedded in the vehicle body and release before any serious snagging would occur.

Although there was little tendency for the vehicle to lift the beam free of the paddles in Test 143 and the beam was actually deflected down in Test 142, it is possible that a vehicle contacting the beam while the front suspension was depressed could dive under the beam and penetrate the barrier. We would consider this modification to the paddles a definite safety factor for unforeseen impact situations.

#### B. Test Procedure and Instrumentation

In general, the testing procedure and photographic instrumentation followed that outlined in previous California reports (4)(5). The test vehicles were 1964 Dodge sedans weighing 4540 lb with dummy and instrumentation. Utilizing their own power, they were guided into the box beam test installations by radio control. "Sierra Sam", an anthropometric dummy, occupied the driver's seat during each collision as a human simulator. "His" kinematics were recorded by a data camera mounted above the rear seat. A typical photographic instrumentation plan is shown in Exhibit 1 (Appendix).

Two "Impactograph" recorders, each utilizing mechanical stylus type accelerometers recording on a strip chart were used to record the transverse, longitudinal and vertical accelerations during impact. One recorder was mounted in the chest cavity of the dummy and one on the rear floor of the vehicle. Due to the effects of "ringing" caused by transient vibrations through the vehicle frame, the recordings from the vehicle impact

recorder were not considered representative of the actual decelerations sustained by the vehicle and are not reported herein. Table 1, shown on the following page, is a tabulation of dynamic data including impact readings taken from the dummy for each of the three tests. Included in the table for comparisons are dynamic data from a previous test series on ""W" beam barriers.

Note that the low exit angles for the semi-flexible box beam barrier impacts are accompanied by large lateral deflections as compared to the high exit angles and small lateral deflections of the semi-rigid "W" beam barrier impacts. Also, as would be expected, the lateral decelerations are much lower with the box beam barrier than with the "W" beam under similar impact conditions. This would favor the box beam barrier insofar as disorientation of the driver is concerned.

#### C. Maintenance and Operations

The selection of 200-300 pen asphalt for anchoring the posts in the sockets is based on eight years operational experience with the California cable barrier where posts are embedded in 30-in. deep sockets. It was found that the 200-300 pen, would retain the 2½14.1 H section posts under severe impact conditions in hot climates (100 - 120 F) yet were readily removed when damaged. However, damaged posts are difficult to remove from the sockets during the winter season when pavement temperatures approach 30 F. Some experimental work is recommended on the use of 60-70 pen, asphalt or even the 85-100 pen, asphalt as suggested by other states before considering the heavier grades for the box beam application, even though the box beam posts are only embedded 16 in.

TABLE 1

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## DYNAMIC DATA

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	TEST	NWI IC	_ ]	3	, MW	M 년	5			VEHICL	E TRA	VEHICLE TRAJECTORY	_			L	BEAM	
BARRIER		<u>~</u>	TRANS.	NS.	LONG.	<u>0</u>	VERT.	<u> -</u>	ANGLE	LE	SPI	SPEED	ROLL	7	HEIGHT	3HT	MAX	DFRM
				ر ح	FWD.	BK.	UP	DN.	ENT.	EXIT*	ENT.	EXIT*	٦	Œ	BEFR.	AFTR.	DYNAMIC	SET
BOX BEAM	141	LAP BELT	2.0			0.25	)	0.5	25°		12	29		ကိ	27"	-0-	1 .	1
BOX BEAM	142	LAP BELT	2.0	<i>i</i> .	0.			0.	25°	မှ	64	46	<u>8</u>		27"	24"	48"	28"
BOX BEAM	143	LAP BELT	1.7		0.25	)	0.2 0	0.2	°01	3	49	38	FLAT	۵T	27"	27.5"		 
W. BEAM BARRIER		LAP BELT 8. CHEST HARNESS	ಸ ದ		2.3		<u>-</u>	<u>ن</u>	25°	15°	69	4		5°	30"	36"	"21	15"
W. BEAM GARDRAIL	201	LAP BELT	2.5		4.1		6.0		25°	170	09	37	FLAT	<u> </u>	27"		21"	 8

Exit angle and speed measured 25' to 50' from point of impact. and prior to cutting ignition and applying brakes.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Readings indicate relative impact intensities as recorded on mechanical stylus "Impactograph". The magnitudes are not to be construed as actual "G"forces.

In all three tests, records were kept of the time required and the details and difficulties encountered in erecting and repairing the barriers. After Test 143 the damaged posts were readily removed. Two men using a forklift were able to remove and replace the three damaged posts and realign the beam in two hours. It was found that the damaged posts and paddles could be readily replaced without removing the beam splices by lifting the beam free of the paddles for a certain distance each side of the damaged post and holding the beam aside while the repair was made.

The following estimates of repair costs are based on the aforementioned information and should be representative of maintenance costs that can be expected for similar damaged sections in operation:

#### Test 142, 65 mph/25 deg.

3- beam sections, \$67.50 ea	\$ 202.50
11- posts, \$2.65 ea	29 . 1.5
22- paddles, \$1.10 ea	24.20
Total Material	\$ 255.85
Labor, 12 man hours @ \$9.00	108.00
Equipment (boom truck 30 mi avg \$0.42	12.60
Grand Total	\$ <u>376.45</u>
Test 143, 49 mph/10 deg.	
3- posts, \$2.65 ea	\$ 7.95
9- paddles, \$1.10 ea	9.90
Total Material	: \$ 17.85
Labor, 6 man hours @ \$9.00	54.00
Equipment (boom truck 30 mi avg @ \$0.42	12.60
Grand Total	\$ <u>84.45</u>

It is estimated that new construction costs for the box beam median barrier designed as shown in Exhibit 2 (Appendix) will vary from a low of \$8.50/lin ft to \$11.50/lin ft dependent upon the proportion of lineal feet constructed on structures where special post anchorages are required and around piers where an envelope design would be required. Recent information from the State of Washington indicates a low bid construction price of \$10.50/lin ft for 2,279-ft of painted box beam barrier of the New York design.

#### PART 2 - DYNAMIC TESTS OF CONCRETE MEDIAN BARRIER

#### I. BACKGROUND

This test series is a continuation of an investigation by the California Division of Highways into the development of a concrete median barrier for use on narrow medians (6 ft or less) (6). It was initially proposed that a rigid type barrier be developed which would retain the effectiveness of the current standard metal "W" beam median barrier as well as be more maintenance free for placement in very narrow medians. It was felt that a non-yielding concrete barrier could provide for these factors and also be designed to be more pleasing in appearance than the "W" beam and treated timber post design.

The first prototype of the New Jersey concrete median barrier design was installed on a test section of that state's highway system in 1955. The over-all height of this prototype barrier was 18 in. However, after adverse operational experience, the height was increased to 24 in. and then in 1959 to the present 32 in. Accident statistics indicated that this 32-in. high design is performing effectively (7).

In 1963 General Motors conducted a series of 21 full scale tests on a concrete bridge parapet design (8) adapted from the New Jersey median barrier design as shown in Figure 10 in comparison with the New Jersey design.

This General Motors sloped front design proved to be entirely adequate in redirecting an impacting vehicle with no barrier damage and minimal vehicle damage. However, it should be noted that the

tests were all conducted at speeds less than 50 mph and at impact angles of 12 deg. and less. This test criteria did not impose as severe a test loading as would the California standards of 65 mph/25 deg. for dynamic impact proof testing of barriers. The General Motors design included a metal railing mounted on top of the concrete wall to insure containment of high-speed wide-angle impacts.

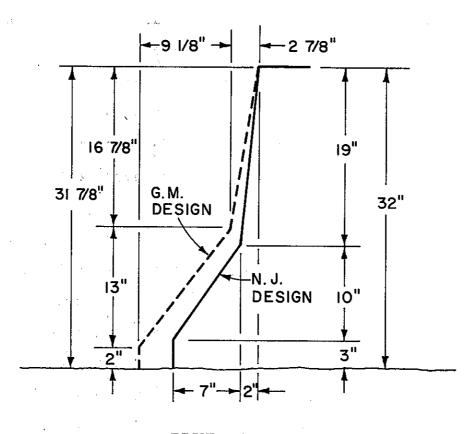


FIGURE 10

The State of New Jersey, in order to obtain additional factual accident analysis of their barrier design, commissioned the Stevens Institute of Technology to conduct a research program to "correlate the geometric properties of rigid concrete

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median barriers and the trajectory parameters of impacting vehicles"(9). These correlations were to be obtained from the analysis of high speed movies of automobile-barrier impact simulation done by use of scale model vehicles and barriers. Barrier design modifications were to be proposed as a result of this study. However, Stevens Institute reported that full realization of the intent of their study was not accomplished in that (1) full scale crash data against rigid barriers that would be pertinent to their study could not be located and (2) a complete description of automobiles in terms of all the parameters needed for accurate scaling could not be assembled.

California had proposed in the initial work plan that the test program would include (1) a review and analysis of the results of the Stevens Institute's theoretical study and (2) dynamic full scale testing of their final design. However, due to their technical difficulties, the Stevens Institute was unable to make any barrier design recommendations. The California tests were therefore conducted on the standard 32-in. high design as developed by the State of New Jersey Highway Department.

#### II. OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this series of tests was to dynamically proof test the New Jersey concrete median barrier to determine the effectiveness of this design for use in narrow medians (6 ft or less).

#### III. CONCLUSIONS

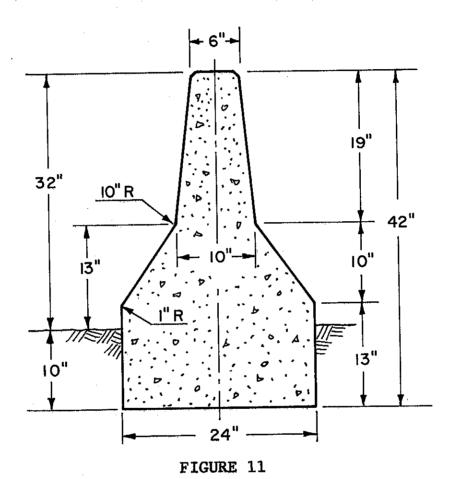
The following conclusions are based on an analysis of the results of the full scale tests conducted during this test series:

- 1. The New Jersey concrete barrier design effectively redirects a medium weight sedan impacting at acute angles (less than 10 deg.) with no or minimal vehicle damage and no barrier damage, indicating that this design would be particularly applicable to narrow medians.
- 2. This barrier design also redirects a medium weight sedan when impacting at a high speed (60 mph) and wide angle (25 deg.) with little or no barrier damage. However, vehicle damage and passenger deceleration rates can be expected to be relatively severe.
- 3. Although this concrete barrier design would provide definite maintenance advantages over the California standard metal beam median barrier, placement of this design should be limited to <u>flat</u> paved medians free of <u>curbs</u>, dikes, ditches, and sawtooth slopes.
- 4. Construction cost of this barrier on one project in Phoenix, Arizona, was \$5.88 lin/ft as compared to the average weighted price of \$11.91/lin ft for 30,700-ft of barrier constructed in the State of New Jersey during 1965. Accurate construction costs for California have not been determined.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

#### A. Design Tested

The median barrier tested was a contoured, solid concrete wall design developed by the State of New Jersey Highway Department as shown in Figure 11.



The installation consisted of eight 32-in. high, 20-ft long, nonreinforced, cast-in-place concrete wall sections. Each individual section consisting of a footing and parapet was a single monolithic pour of approximately 3 cubic yards weighing 6 tons. Adjacent sections were not doweled or

connected at the expansion joints, Exhibit 5 (Appendix). The strength of the Class A concrete, specified at 3000 psi minimum at 28 days, was in excess of 6200 psi at the time of the impact test.

#### B. <u>Test Parameters</u>

The test vehicle used in this study was a 1965 Dodge sedan weighing 4540 lb with dummy and instrumentation. The test impact speeds and angles were as follows:

- a. Initial trial test 20 mph/2 deg.
- b. Test 161-A 38 mph/7 deg.
- c. Test 161-B 65 mph/7 deg.
- d. Test 162 63 mph/25 deg.

For the initial test the vehicle was driven into the barrier at a low speed and narrow angle by a test driver. For the succeeding three tests the vehicle was radio remote controlled from a follow vehicle.

The procedures taken to prepare, remotely control, and target the test vehicle are generally similar to those used in past test series and are detailed in previous California reports (4)(5).

#### C. <u>Instrumentation</u>

Photographic and mechanical instrumentation procedures and equipment employed in this test series are generally similar to those used in the New York box beam barrier test series and in other past California test series.

Table 2, shown on the following page, is a tabulation of dynamic data including readings on the impactograph installed in the chest of the dummy driver during each of the three

TABLE 2

## DYNAMIC DATA

	i C L			DUMMY		IMPACT	*			VEHICL	E TR/	VEHICLE TRAJECTORY	<b> </b>	
BARRIER	SO.	RESTRAINT	TR/	TRANS.	LONG.	Z.	VERT.	٦٢.	ANGLE	J.E	SP	SPEED	ROLL	
			لب	ъ.	FWD.	BK.	UP	DN.	ENT.	EXIT*	ENT.	EXIT*	1	æ
NEW JERSEY MEDIAN	¥-191	LAP BELT	1.0		0.2	0.1		0.2	2،		38	14		
NEW JERSEY MEDIAN	8-191	LAP BELT	1.2		0.7		0.7	0.2	20		65	19		<u>4</u>
NEW JERSEY MEDIAN	162	LAP BELT	4.3		0.8	0.7	0.1	1.7	25°	ا3،	63	55		25°
W. BEAM MEDIAN	101	LAP BELT 8 HARNESS	3.5		2.3			1.5	25°	15°	69	14		5°
W. BEAM GARDRAIL	107	LAP BELT	2.5		1.4		6.0		25°	اک	09	37	FL	 FLAT 
NEW YORK MEDIAN	142	LAP BELT	2.0		1.0			1.0	25°	9،	64	46	.81	
CONCRETE TP.1 BR. RAIL	B-5	LAP BELT & HARNESS	4.0		2.0			1.3	25°	5°	82	62		2°

\* Exit angle and speed measured 25' to 50' from point of impact and prior to cutting ignition and applying brakes. \*\* Readings indicate relative impact intensities as recorded on mechanical stylus "Impactograph". The magnitudes are not to be construed as actual "G" forces.

tests in this series. Included in the exhibit for comparisons are dynamic data from previous tests on semi-flexible box beam barrier, semi-rigid "W" beam median barrier and guardrail, and rigid concrete parapet California Type 1 bridge rail.

It was noted that although the transverse decelerations are relatively large for Test 162, they are typical of those recorded on rigid concrete bridge rails. Vertical decelerations are generally in the same range as with the other types of barrier systems. Of particular interest is the comparison of the longitudinal deceleration when impacting three different barrier systems at a 25 deg. angle. The low longitudinal decelerations recorded in the concrete barrier tests indicate that, even at this severe impact angle, forward progression through impact was relatively smooth.

#### D. <u>Barrier - Vehicle Performance</u>

### 1. Energy Dissipation

In theory, a structurally adequate rigid-type barrier will contain and redirect an impacting vehicle. However, to be effective, vehicle trajectory parameters and the dissipation of force must be within limits tolerable to the passengers.

The actual forces involved in impacting a barrier consist of relatively large quantities of kinetic energy. The effective redirection of an impacting vehicle by the barrier involves the dissipation or reduction of the kinetic energy with as little as possible absorbed by the vehicle. The amount of energy that must be absorbed to obtain effective redirection is dependent on vehicle

weight, speed and impact angle, and can be determined by resolving it into velocity components parallel with and perpendicular to the barrier. The total theoretical kinetic energy developed during each of the three tests conducted are listed in Table III.

TABLE III

Theoretical Kinetic Energy (Ft-Lb)

Test	Parallel Component	Perpendicular Component	Total <u>Energy</u>
161-A	219,000	3,000	222,000
161-B	626,000	9,000	635,000
162	500,000	108,000	608,000

Assuming the brakes are not applied, dissipation of the energy component parallel with the barrier during satisfactory redirection is accomplished through friction force that is developed through (1) vehicle-barrier contact, and (2) wheel-pavement contact. With most barrier designs, the body of an impacting vehicle is in contact with the barrier throughout redirection. However, with the design tested in this investigation, at low angles the only vehicle contact may be that of the impacting front wheel. Thus the vehicle-barrier friction force may be provided for only by the scrubbing action of this wheel as it climbs and is redirected by the lower sloping parapet face. The wheel-pavement interactions in any vehicular redirection are dependent on factors such as (1) tire condition, (2) weather, (3) weight distribution, and (4) roadway surface material and condition.

tests the wheel-pavement friction force was generally provided through overcoming (1) "crabbing" of the wheels during redirection, (2) turning force of the tires against the pavement, and (3) normal tire-pavement rolling friction. The surface upon which these tests were conducted is an open grade plant mix bituminous pavement with a coefficient of friction of approximately 0.30. The tires on the test vehicle were near-new 6 ply 7:60-15, and were inflated to 30 psi.

The entire energy component perpendicular to the barrier must be absorbed for effective vehicle retention. This is accomplished through elastic and plastic deformation of the barrier, vehicle, or both. The barrier can transmit a portion of this energy to the structure as in the case of the concrete bridge rail or to the soil such as with the W beam barrier on wood posts. However, with a rigid system, such as this design, if the barrier does not fail, minimal energy is absorbed by the barrier and very little by the soil. Therefore, the vehicle must absorb or dissipate almost all the energy.

The unique feature of this barrier design is the sloping lower face of the parapet. This provides for the absorption of a large portion of this energy by lifting the vehicle wheels on the sloping face and by compression of the vehicle suspension system prior to any contact with the barrier by the body or chassis. With low angle impacts, this application of initial resistance force at the wheel rather than at the body provides satisfactory

vehicular redirection with little or no damage to the vehicle. When the vehicle weight, speed, and impact angle are such that the perpendicular component is beyond the energy absorption capacity of the vehicle wheel and suspension system, the remainder of the energy must be absorbed by deformation of the vehicle body and chassis.

Because a substantial uplift force is imparted to the impacting side of the vehicle as the wheel ascends the sloping face of the barrier, the rolling moment toward the barrier is overcome, and the vehicle rolls away from the barrier. The degree and duration of this roll is dependent on the amount of climb and the absorption capacity of the vehicle's suspension system.

It was noted that General Motors experienced similar vehicle reactions in their tests (8). With a standard size sedan impacting at 50 mph/12 deg., the vehicle climb was 18 in. and the resulting roll approximately 30 deg. away from the barrier, whereas a truck impacting at 37 mph/13 deg. did not climb the barrier and consequently the roll was toward the barrier.

The Stevens Institute using scale model vehicles was unable to duplicate these vehicle trajectories in their study (9). In their tests of the General Motors barrier design, the model vehicle climbed much higher; and although the roll was away from the barrier, it was extreme as the model vehicle landed on its right rear wheel and appears to have overturned. Stevens' test of the New Jersey barrier design exhibited no correlation as the model

vehicle rolled toward the barrier and landed on its left wheels in all tests. Stevens indicated that valid proportioning of the model vehicle, particularly its dynamic response, was the major factor contributing to their lack of correlation with full scale impacts.

#### 2. Preliminary Tests

As a preliminary to the proposed dynamic tests and to obtain a "feel" for the redirective properties of this barrier design, a familiarization test was conducted with the test vehicle driven into the barrier by a test engineer at 20 mph/2 deg.

Immediately prior to impact, the test driver released the steering wheel to simulate the worst condition of an out-of-control vehicle where the driver was either drunk, unconscious or completely inattentive.

Because the 7:10 slope (55 deg. upward) on the lower face of this barrier closely approximates the face slope of the California Standard Type C mountable curb and the Type B semi-mountable curb, it was anticipated that the impacting wheel would climb this face. However, the rapidity with which it climbed up the lower face to a height of 17 in. startled the test driver so that he took over control of the vehicle and steered it down and off the barrier. Although this left some doubt as to how much higher the vehicle might have climbed, it did indicate that a driver, following a casual impact with this barrier, could readily regain control of his vehicle.

No damage was sustained by either the vehicle or the barrier, Exhibit 6 (Appendix).

#### 3. Test No. 161-A

Test 161-A, the first remote radio controlled test on the New Jersey concrete barrier design was conducted at an approach angle of 7 deg. and at a speed of 38 mph.

The test vehicle was effectively redirected with no rebound into the traveled lanes and with a maximum roll of 2 deg. away from the barrier. Within 3 feet of initial contact, the impacting wheel had climbed 8 in. up the sloping lower face and remained approximately at this height throughout the remaining 92-ft of contact with the barrier.

It is interesting to note that, contrary to the general hypothesis, the front wheels were not deflected or turned away from the barrier by the sloping lower face, but instead "crabbed" or turned into the barrier. The wheels retained this attitude through impact; and as the vehicle came off the end of the barrier, turned it in a sweeping curve to the left toward the projected line of the barrier. The effect this had on the vehicle was to keep it steering into the barrier; whereas if the wheels had been turned away, the vehicle would have swung out away from the barrier and into the traveled lanes.

The vehicle body contacted the upper barrier parapet 3 ft beyond initial impact and for a distance of 6.5 ft. The only damage sustained by the vehicle was slight sheet metal damage and scratched paint in the left front fender

area. A close inspection of the steering mechanism and running gear revealed no damage or misalignment that would alter the vehicle's steering characteristics. This vehicle was used without repairs for the succeeding test.

Data film and impactograph recordings of the dummy driver indicates that a live driver would have sustained no injuries.

The barrier sustained no damage.

#### 4. Test No. 161-B

For Test 161-B the same 7 deg. approach angle was used, but the impact speed was increased to 65 mph.

The vehicle was effectively redirected with a maximum rebound of only 1.4 ft and a maximum roll of 14 deg. away from the barrier.

Within 7.5-ft of initial contact, the impacting wheel had climbed 14 in. up the sloping lower face. It remained approximately at this height for an additional 17.5 ft before rebounding away from the barrier. The vehicle did not recontact the barrier. However, it was yawing toward the barrier through impact, and would have reestablished contact had the barrier installation been longer. Application of the brakes caused the vehicle to veer in a sweeping curve to the right away from the barrier.

The vehicle body contacted the upper portion of the parapet at initial impact and for a distance of 12.5 ft. Vehicle damage consisted of minor sheet metal damage to the front fender, a dented bumper, and scratched paint

at the left rear door and quarter panel. The left front wheel was bent and required replacement. No damage to the steering mechanism or running gear was found, and this vehicle was used with no further repairs for the succeeding test.

Data film and impactograph recordings of the dummy driver indicate that a live driver could have sustained slight shoulder bruises. The barrier sustained no damage.

#### 6. Test No. 162

Test 162, the final test on the New Jersey barrier, was conducted at 63 mph/25 deg. and within close tolerance to the California Division of Highways standard criteria for proof testing a barrier.

The vehicle was redirected to an exit angle of 12 deg. at a maximum roll of 25 deg. away from the barrier. The impacting wheel climbed 21 in. up the lower sloping face immediately after initial contact and remained approximately at this height for a distance of 12.5 ft. As the vehicle left the barrier, it was entirely airborne for a distance of 20 ft before coming down on the right front wheel 32 ft beyond impact and 4 ft out from the face of the barrier.

The vehicle body contacted the barrier immediately at initial impact and for a distance of 12 ft. As the vehicle was redirected parallel to and away from the

barrier, moderate damage was sustained by the left front quarter panel and rear bumper with minor scratches to the paint along the left side. The left front end sustained severe sheet metal and undercarriage damage.

Although the damage to the vehicle was considered severe, it was comparable to that sustained in similar high-speed, wide-angle tests on the standard blocked-out beam type barrier and a test on a concrete parapet bridge rail as shown in Exhibit 7 (Appendix).

Restrained by a conventional lap belt, the dummy driver was propelled by the relatively severe lateral deceleration forces into the left front door and door frame with sufficient force to "spring" the door open and tear the door post from the roof.

The barrier sustained no damage other than very slight spalling of concrete at the expansion joint immediately adjacent to the point of impact.

#### E. Maintenance and Operation

The results of the flat angle tests indicate that casual impacts into the New Jersey concrete barrier, that represent a majority of the freeway median barrier accidents, would result in little or no damage to either the barrier or the offending vehicle. The high-speed wide-angle test indicates that maintenance repairs to this barrier design would be minimal even after a relatively severe impact. This would reflect a maintenance advantage over the "W" beam-type barrier under moderate to severe impact conditions where damaged beams or posts require replacement. However, it

should be pointed out that operational studies have indicated that a majority of the casual to moderate impacts with the "W" beam-type barrier are unreported and require no maintenance.

On the other hand, any impact, however casual, with the California cable barrier results in barrier damage usually requiring immediate repairs.

Damage to the New Jersey concrete barrier resulting from a more severe collision, such as a very high speed, wide angle vehicle impact or a truck impact, could be readily and inexpensively made using the improved epoxy-grout method. Extensive damage could be handled by replacement of the entire damaged section with a precast replacement unit. Initial construction of the barrier utilizing precast units has been proposed and also merits consideration.

The State of Arizona constructed the New Jersey concrete barrier on an existing 6-in. curbed raised median. Operational reports indicate that this raised median presents vaulting problems causing impacting vehicles to initially contact the barrier above the lower sloped face. On two occasions reported, the vehicles vaulted after impacting the curbing and were partially airborne when they struck the upper portion of the barrier parapet knocking out pieces of concrete. A recent accident picture shows a vehicle with the left wheels projecting over the top of the parapet. Tire marks on the face of the barrier indicate that initial contact was made on the upper portion of the parapet approximately 16 in. from the top, and continued for approximately 20 ft at the same elevation before straddling the barrier. Vehicle

damage appeared to be relatively moderate, and there was no apparent barrier damage. These illustrations from operational experience emphasize the importance of placing this barrier on flat medians free of curbs, dikes, ditches, and sawtooth cross sections.

Accident statistics from states currently using the New Jersey barrier design have not indicated any severe concrete spalling from impacts. However, due to the high ADT and proportionally high truck traffic recorded on this state's urban freeways, the likelihood of this occurring should not be overlooked. Therefore, some consideration should be given to reinforcing the relatively thin upper 18-in. portion of the parapet with a heavy gage steel mesh. The purpose of this mesh would not be for adding structural strength to the system but to prevent broken pieces of concrete from being dislodged into the traveled lanes after an impact by a heavy vehicle.

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- 4. Field, R. N. and R. H. Prysock, "Dynamic Full Scale Impact Tests of Double Blocked-Out Metal Beam Barriers and Metal Beam Guard Railing, Series X", California Division of Highways. February 1965.
- 5. Nordlin, E. F., R. N. Field, and R. P. Hackett, "Dynamic Full-Scale Impact Tests of Bridge Barrier Rails", California Department of Public Works, presented at 43rd Annual HRB Meeting. January 1964.
- 6. Field, R. N. and R. N. Doty, "A Dynamic Full Scale Impact
  Test on a Precast Concrete Median Barrier, Test Series
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- 7. "Center Barrier Save Lives", New Jersey State Highway
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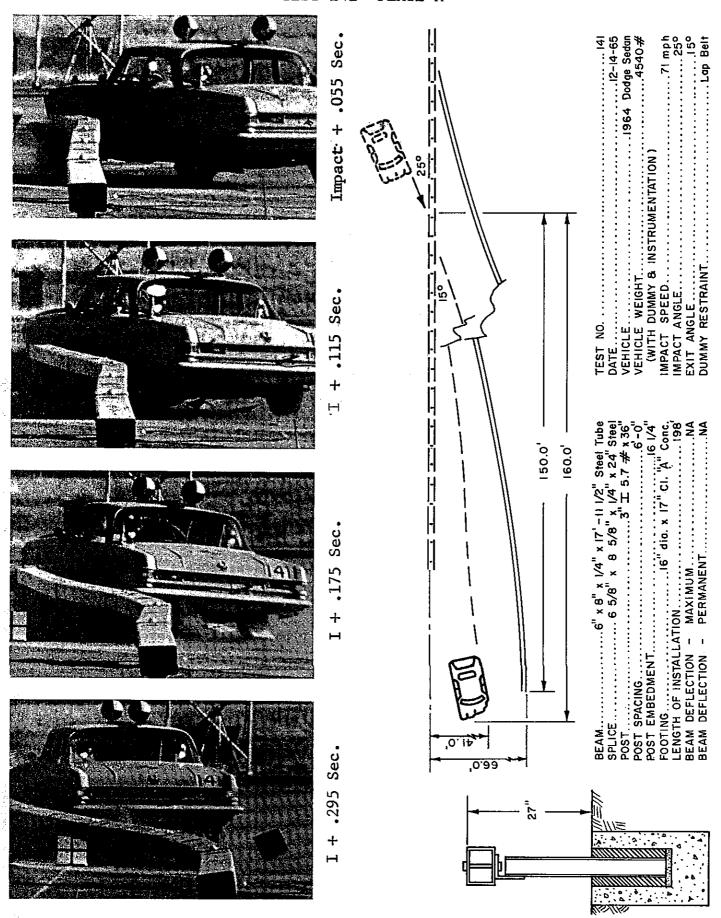
- 8. Lundstrom, L. C. et al, "A Bridge Parapet Designed for Safety", General Motors Proving Grounds, presented at 44th Annual HRB Meeting. January 1965.
- 9. Jurkat, M. P. and J. A. Starett, "Automobile-Barriers Impact Studies Using Scale Model Vehicles", Stevens Institute of Technology. August 1966.

#### APPENDIX

The following groups of plates contain pertinent data and photographs of the impact tests discussed in this report. Each group covers the following:

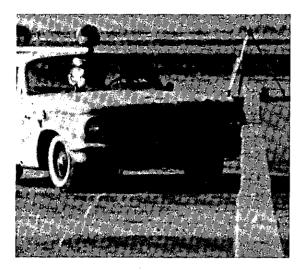
- A. A data sheet showing panned camera view of vehicle through impact and a tabulation of test parameters.
- B. A series of sequence pictures from the scaffold mounted camera.
- C. & D. Detailed photographs of barrier and vehicle damage.

Exhibits 1 through 7.

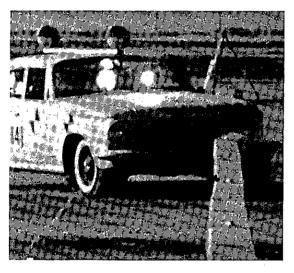


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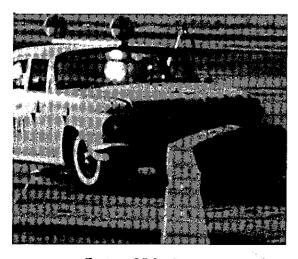
## TEST 141 PLATE B



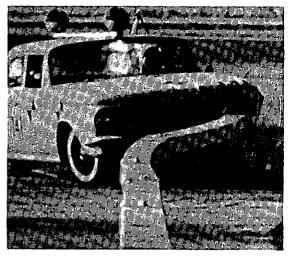
Impact



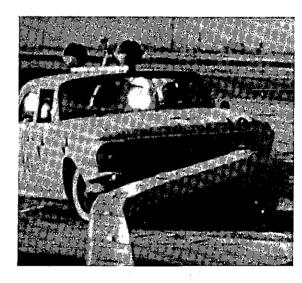
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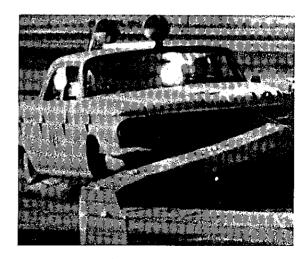
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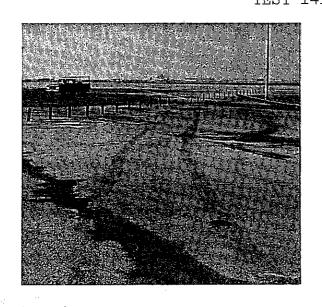


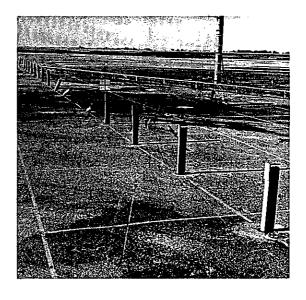
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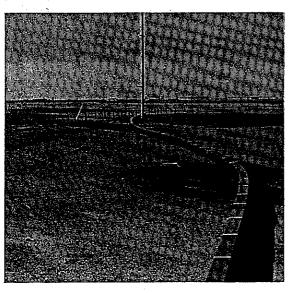


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TEST 141 PLATE C

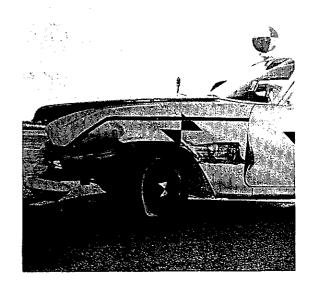




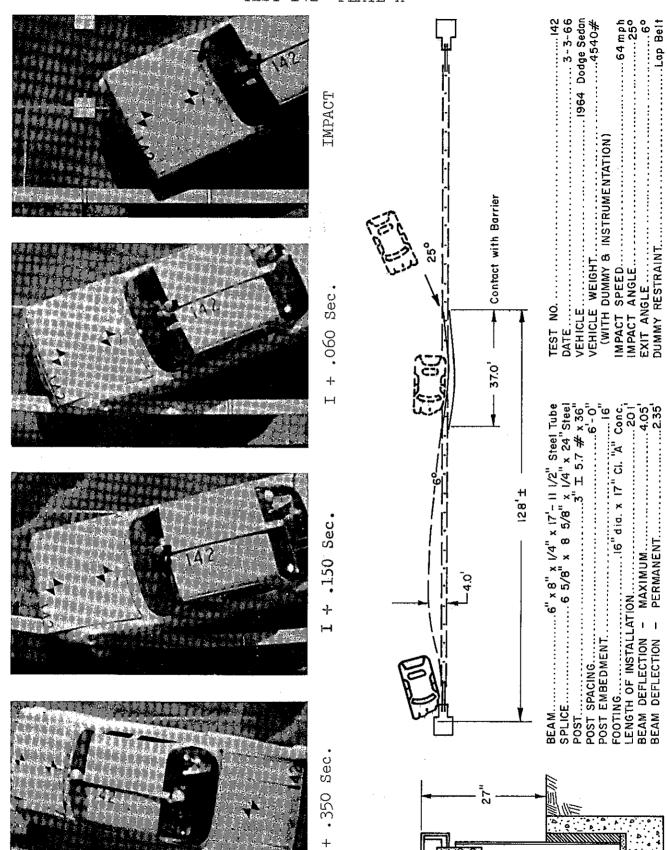








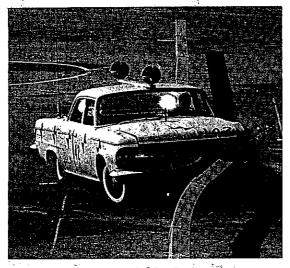
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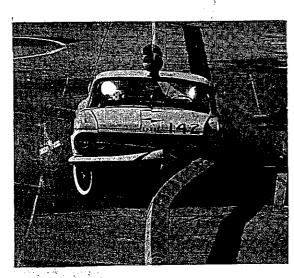
# TEST 142 PLATE B



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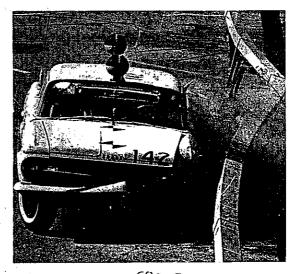
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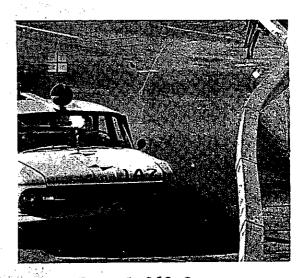
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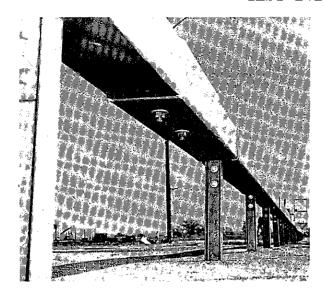


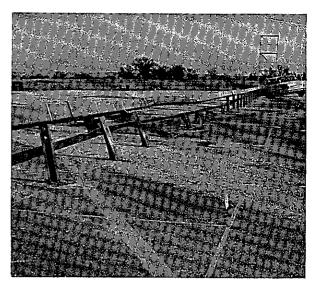
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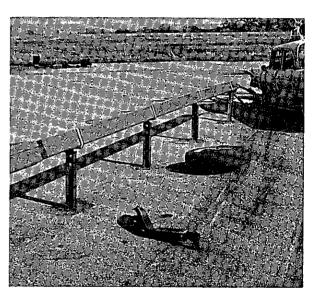
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**-47-**TEST 142 PLATE C

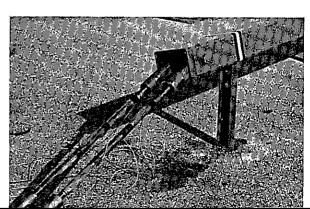




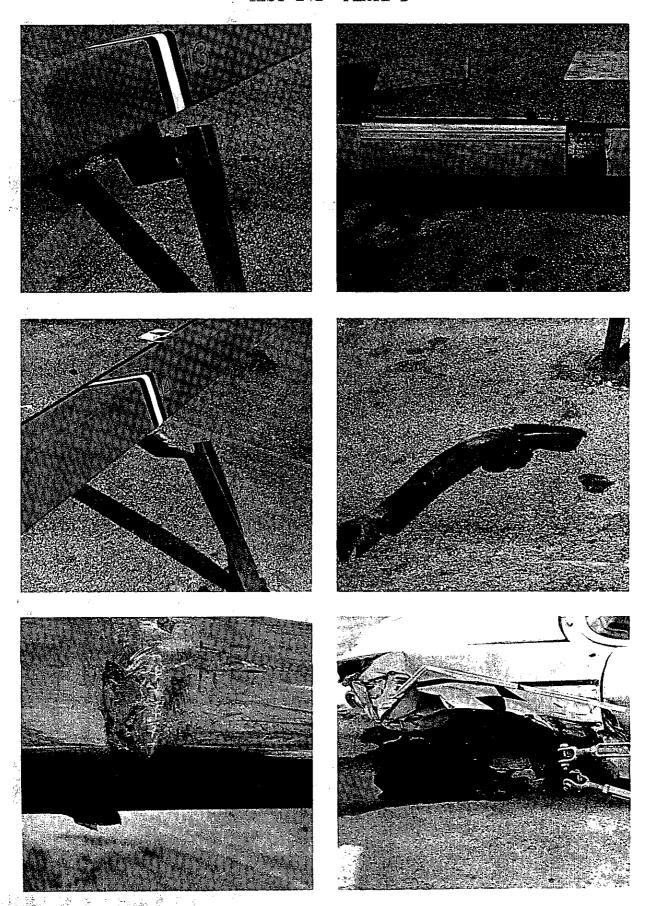




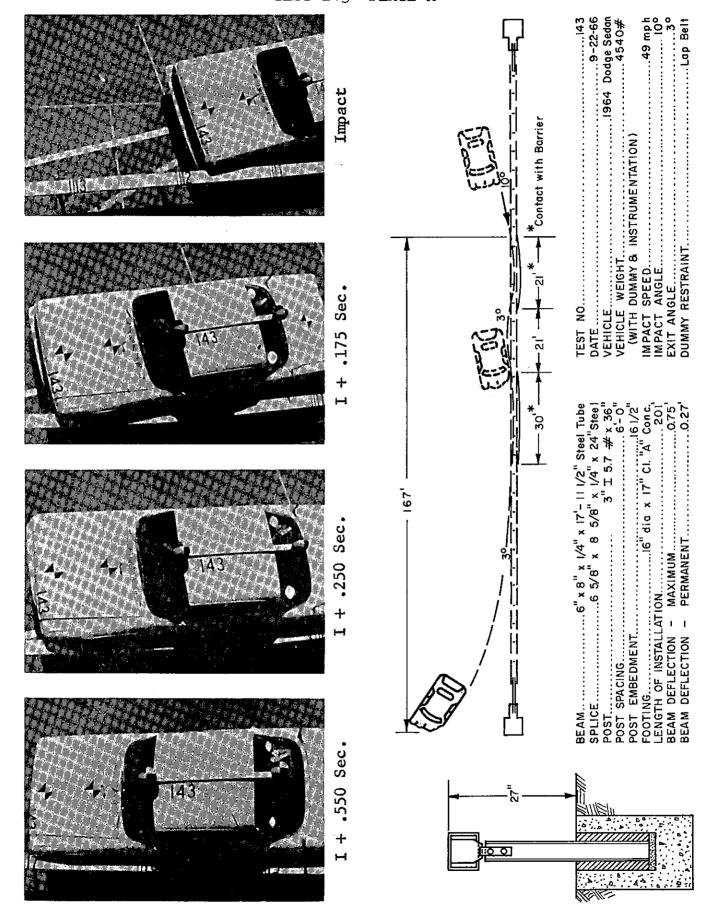




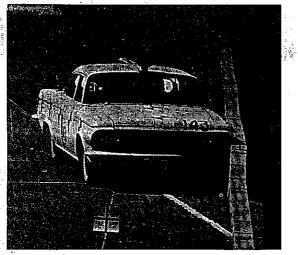
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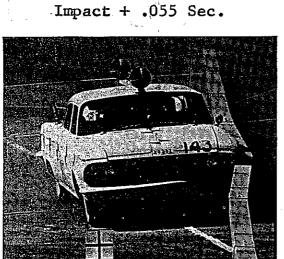


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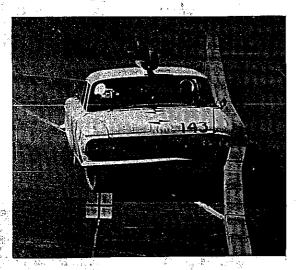


## TEST 143 PLATE B

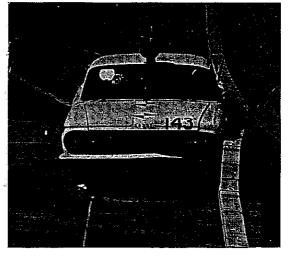




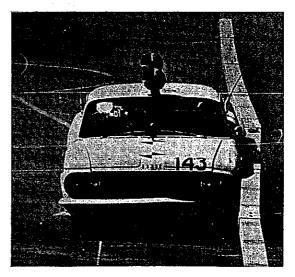
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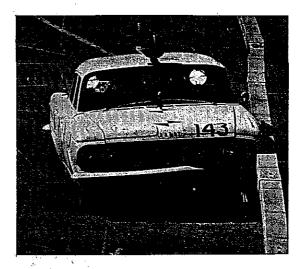
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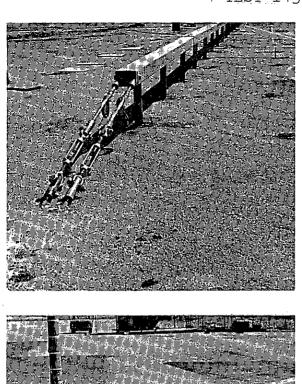
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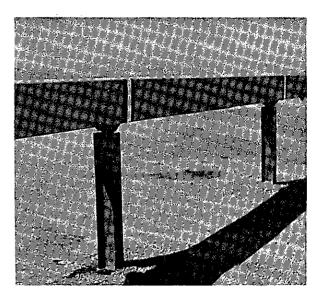


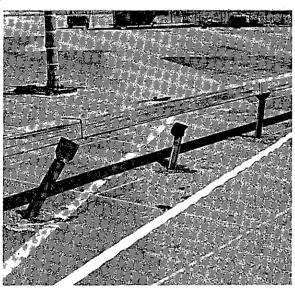
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-51-

# TEST 143 PLATE C

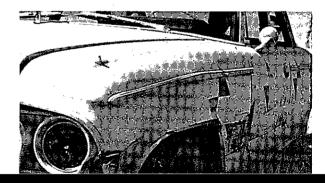




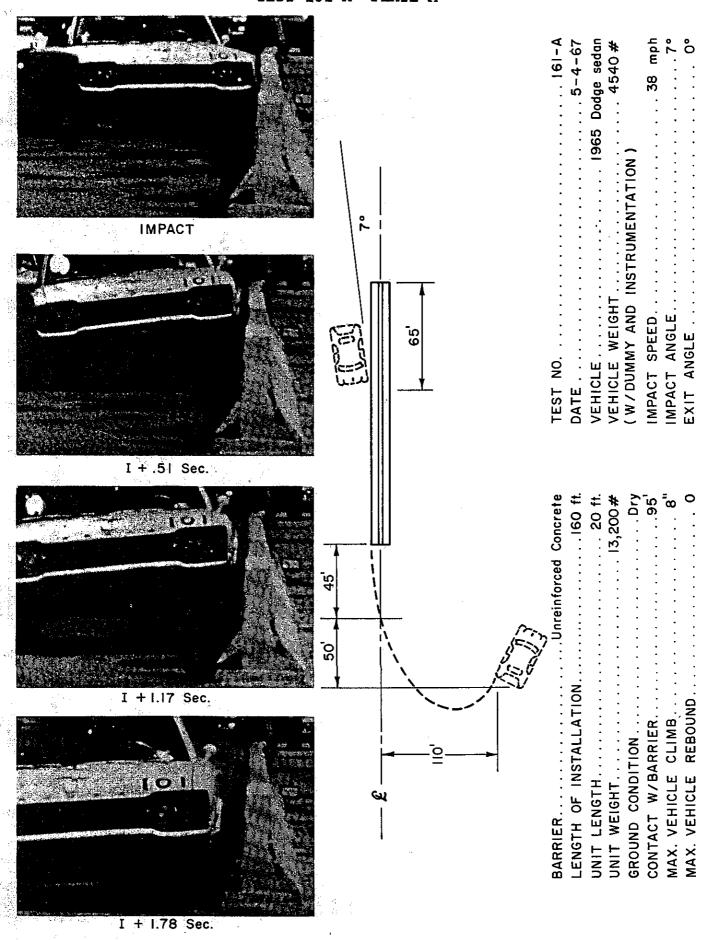




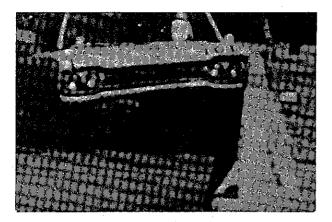




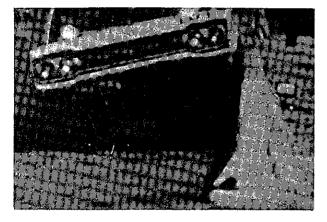
#### TEST 161-A PLATE A



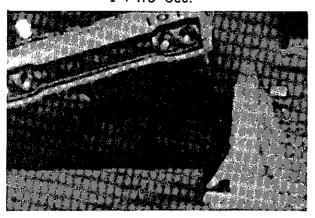
### TEST 161-B PLATE A



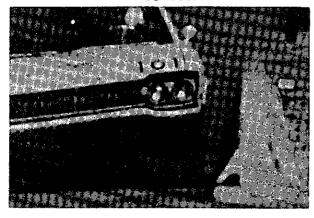
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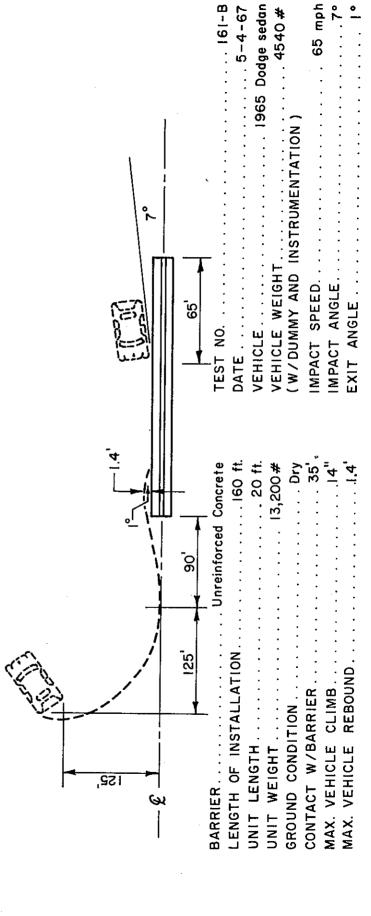
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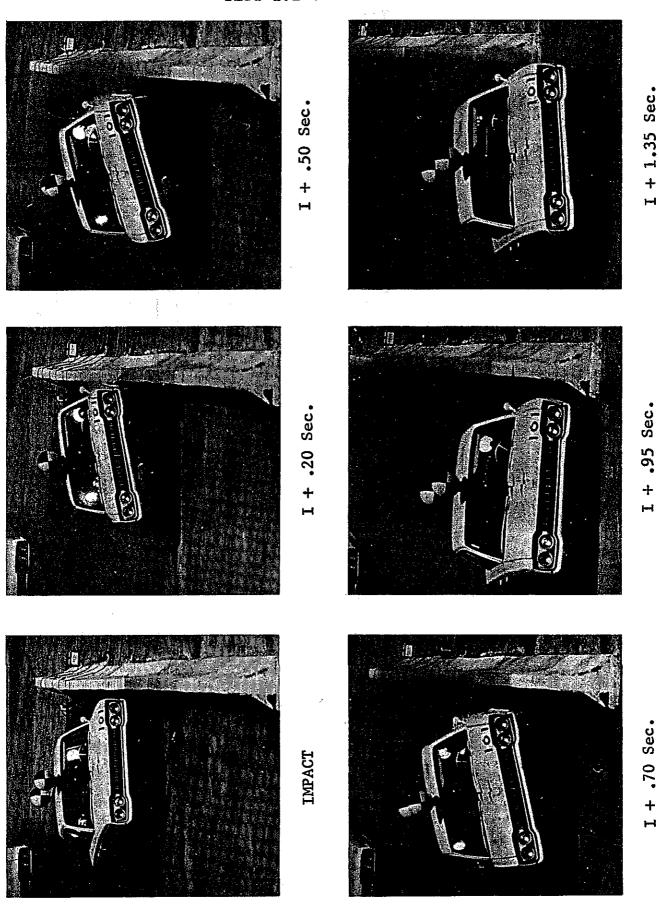
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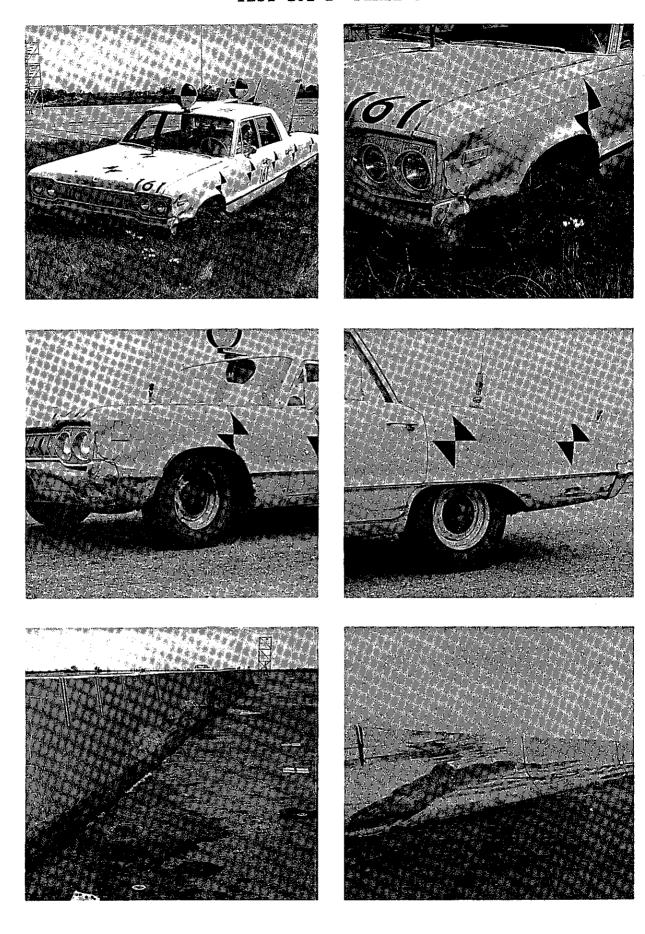
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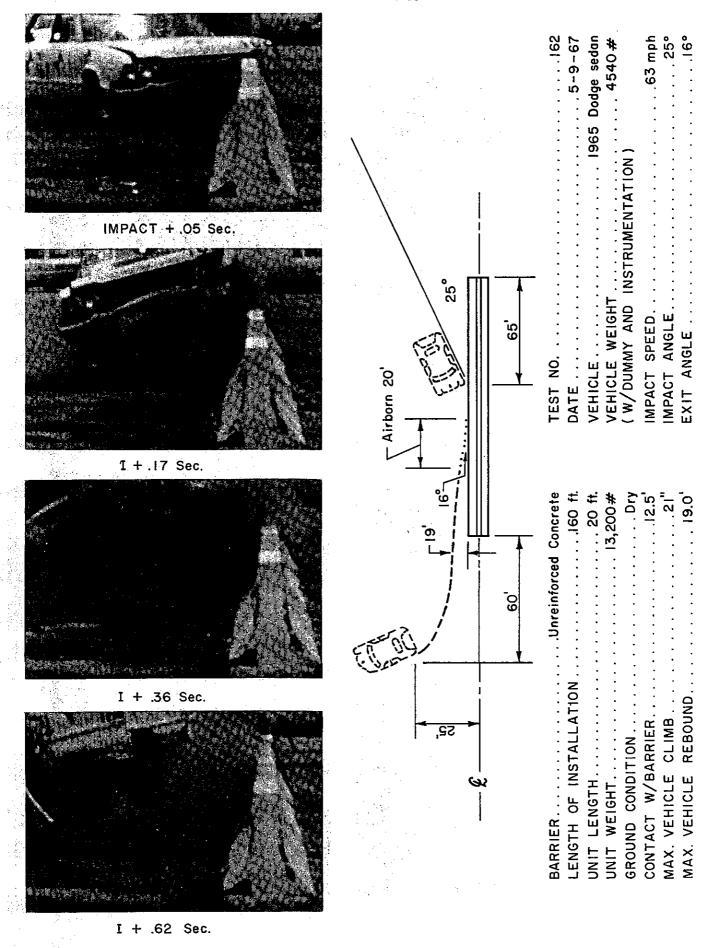
# TEST 161-B PLATE B



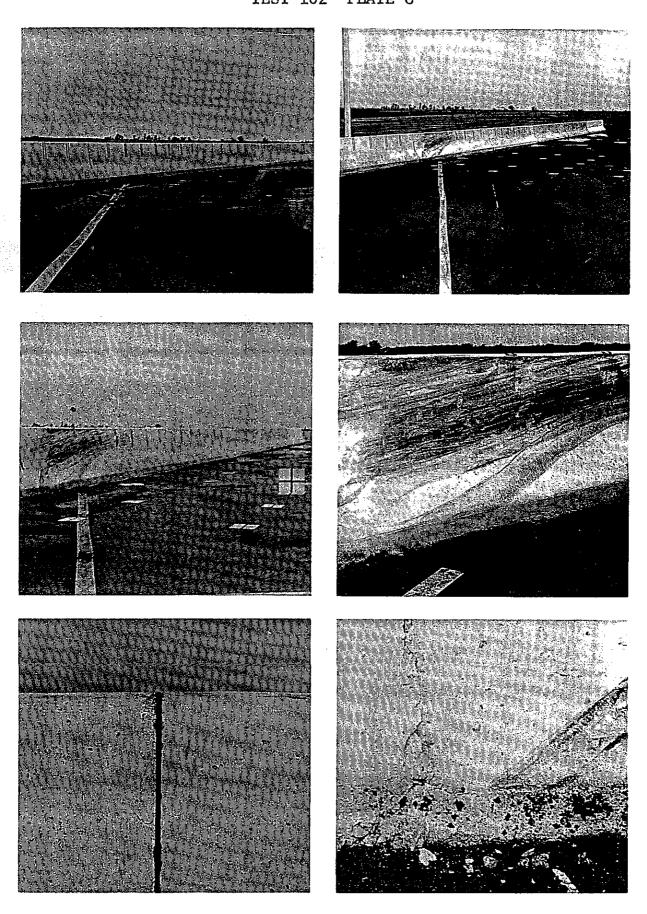
-57-TEST 161-B PLATE C



## TEST 162 PLATE A



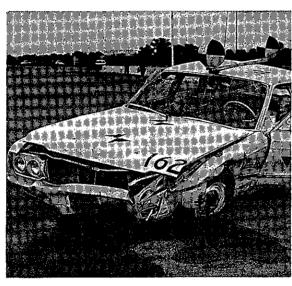
-60-TEST 162 PLATE C



-61-TEST 162 PLATE D

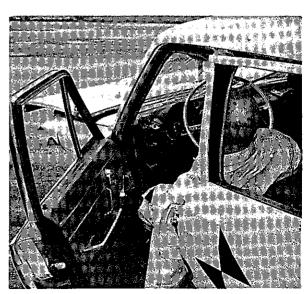


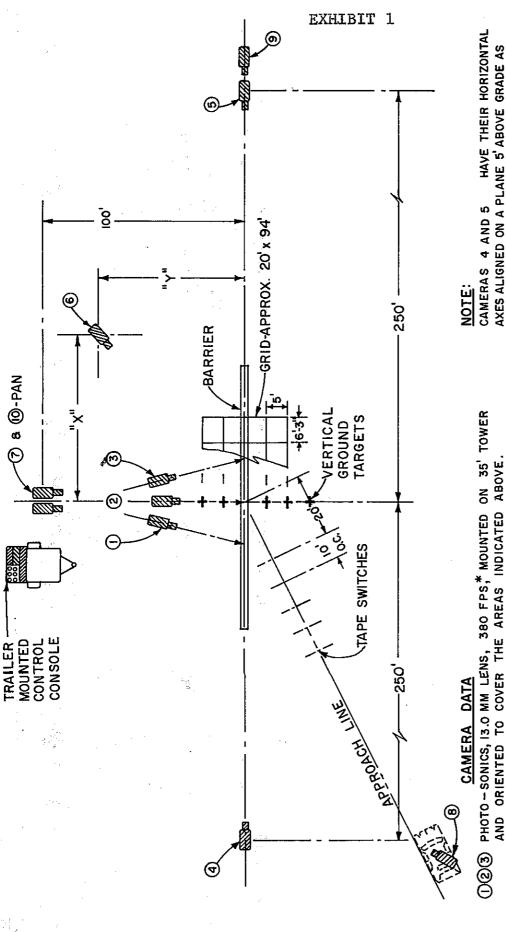












CAMERAS 4 AND 5 HAVE THEIR HORIZONTA AXES ALIGNED ON A PLANE 5' ABOVE GRADE AS MEASURED AT THE DESIRED POINT OF IMPACT. DIMENSIONS "X" B "Y" DEPEND UPON BARRIER LENGTH, AND IMPACT ANGLE.

INSTRUMENTATION - TYPICAL PLAN DYNAMIC FULL SCALE BARRIER TESTS **PHOTOGRAPHIC** 

PHOTO - SONIC, 5.3 MM WIDE ANGLE LENS, 200 FPS, INSIDE TEST CAR.

46 PHOTO - SONICS, 4" LENS, 380 FPS.

PHOTO - SONIC, 2" LENS, 380 FPS. PHOTO - SONIC, 2" LENS, 380 FPS.

**@** 

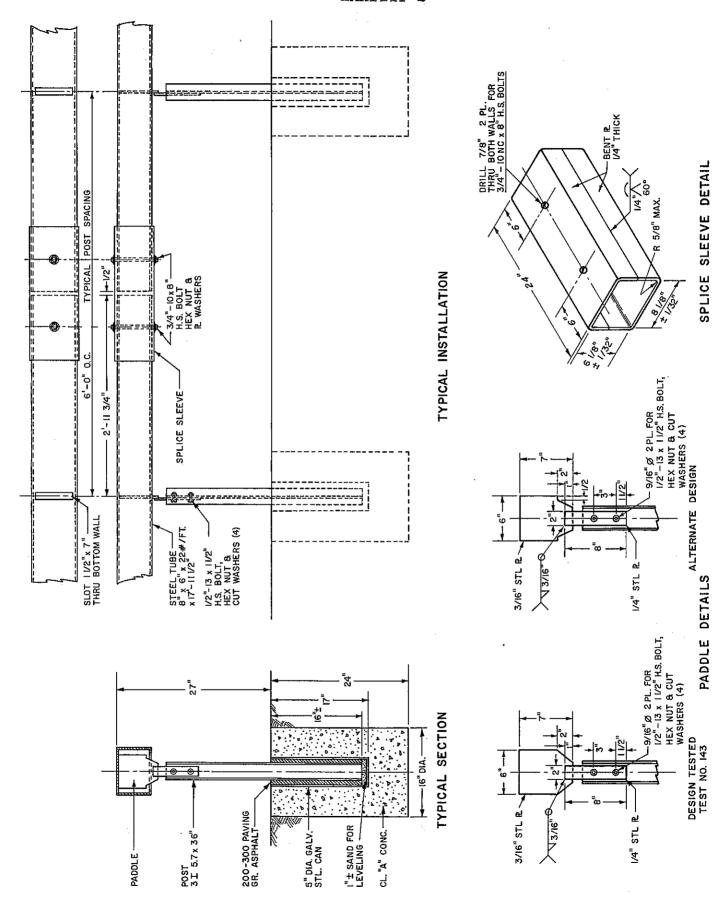
HULCHER, 70 MM SEQUENCE CAMERA, 12" LENS,

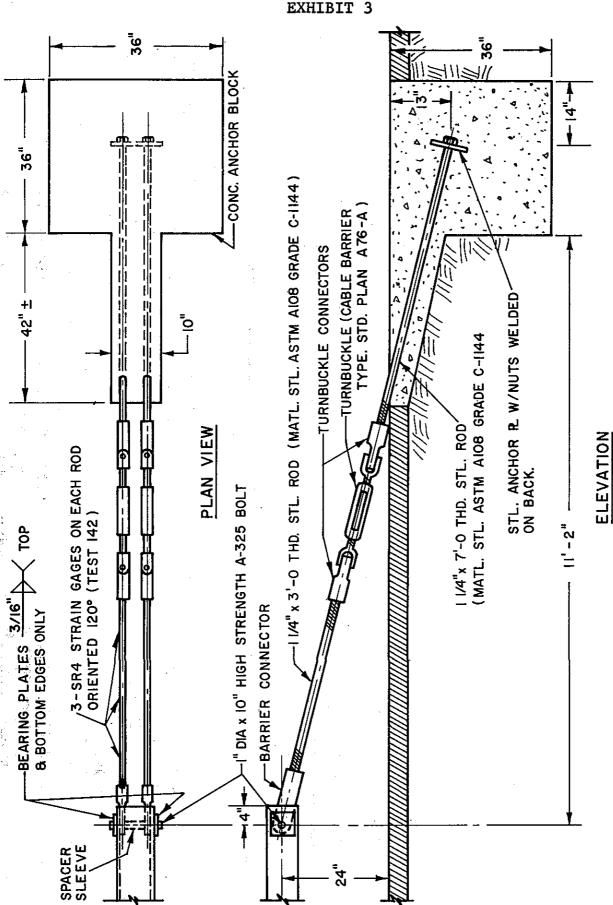
**@**@

MOUNTED ABOUT 12 HIGH ON SCAFFOLD.

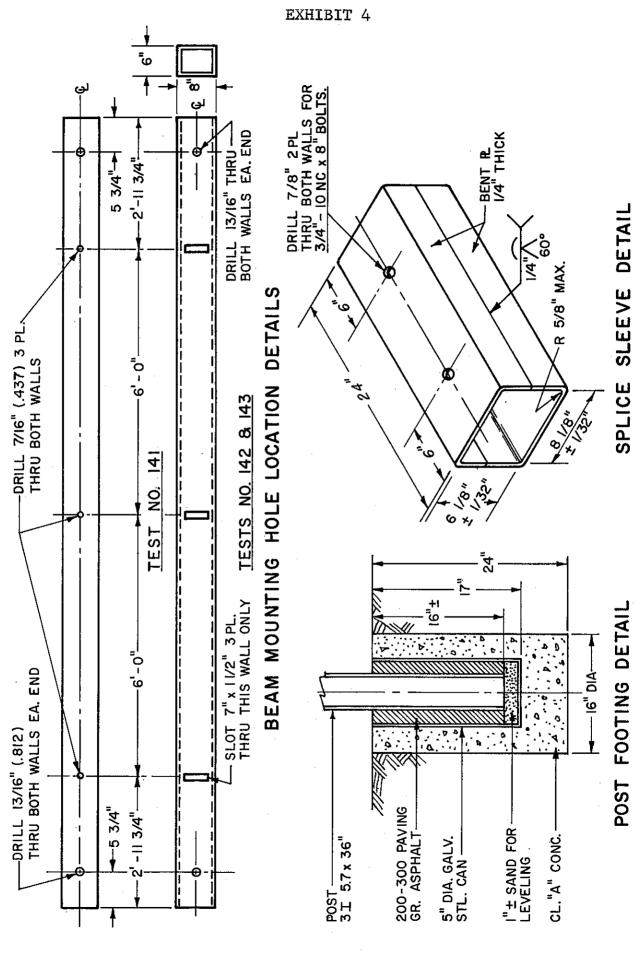
BOLEX, 1"LENS, 24 FPS. FRAMES PER SECOND.

**@** \*



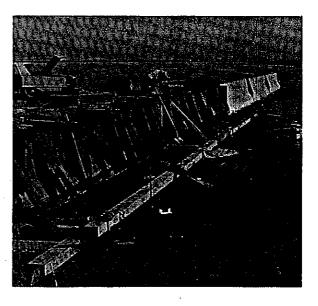


END ANCHOR ASSEMBLY TESTS NO. 142 8 143

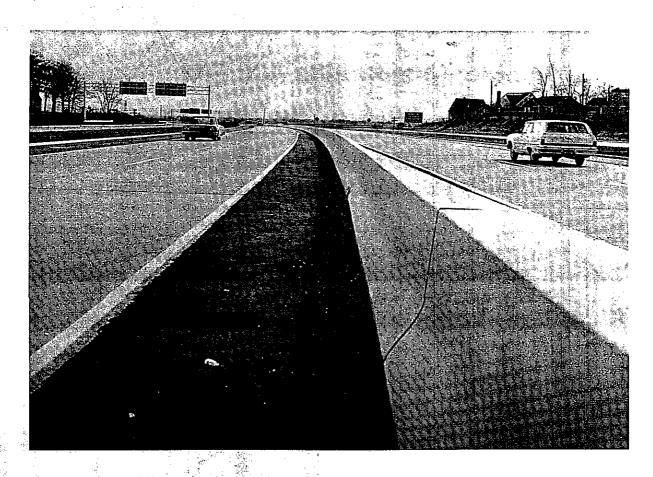


# EXHIBIT 5





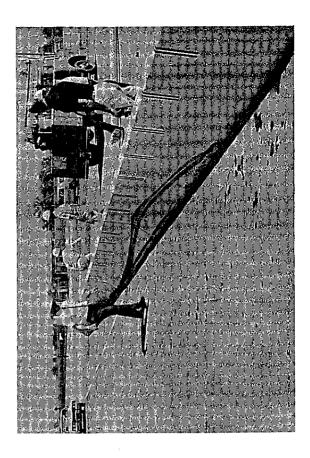
CALIFORNIA TEST INSTALLATION

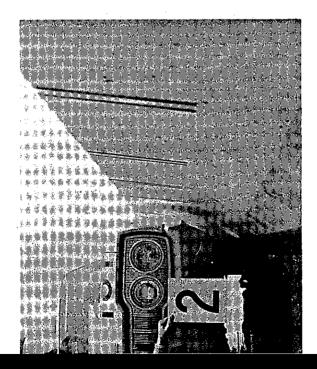


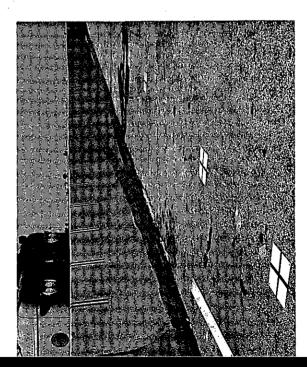
I-80 NEW JERSEY

### EXHIBIT 6

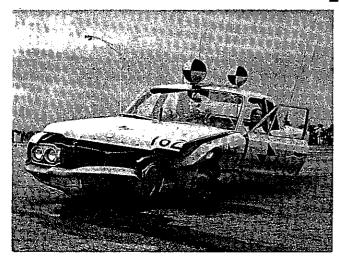


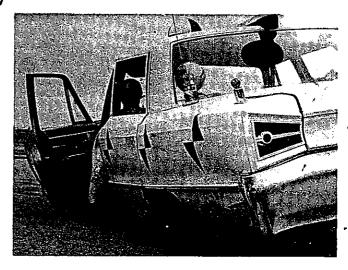




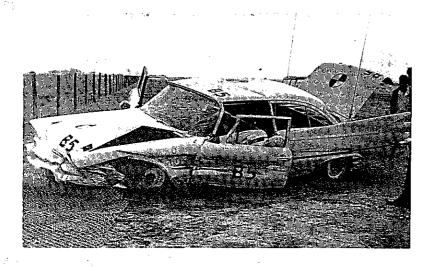


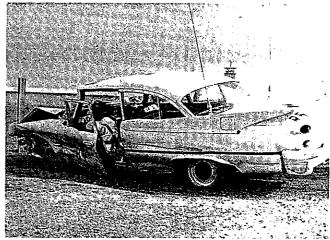
### EXHIBIT 7





TEST 162 - NEW JERSEY CONCRETE MEDIAN BARRIER





TEST B-5 CONCRETE PARAPET BRIDGE RAIL (TYPE I)





TEST 101 - "W" BEAM MEDIAN BARRIER

COMPARISON OF VEHICLE DAMAGE ON THREE BARRIER TYPES